

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

Success Stories from the Field

Tempco Products Inc.

Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center

After Five Decades in Business, Tempco Products, Inc. Finds the Resolve to go Lean

Client Profile:

Tempco Products, Inc. manufactures new construction and replacement vinyl windows, patio doors and bay/bow windows, as well as aluminum storm windows and doors. The company employs 75 people at its facility in Robinson, Illinois.

Situation:

When the competition began encroaching on Tempco Products' long-held markets, the company decided to make improvements to its manufacturing facility and processes. "We had to be more competitive, not on service or quality, but on price," said Brad Surrells, assistant plant manager at Tempco Products. The company did not have the internal resources to make the necessary improvements so it turned to the Illinois Manufacturing Extension Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, for assistance.

Solution:

IMEC consultants developed a plan that included manufacturing training for every employee, Value Stream Mapping, 5S, cellular manufacturing and workplace simulations. In addition, IMEC and the Tempco Products team worked together to design and implement a total rearrangement of the plant, including all production, material storage, shipping and receiving areas, with careful consideration for material flow, material staging and future growth. "IMEC's professionalism and knowledge were remarkable," Surrells said. "They provided us with everything we needed and, more important, helped us find the resolve within ourselves to make these changes." As a result of IMEC's assistance, Tempco Products has reduced lead time and material flow significantly. The company has been able to integrate three common product lines into one, sharing valuable resources across products. Company employees, naturally resistant to the changes at first, have embraced the new processes and continue to generate improvement ideas through Lean teams. In addition, Tempco Products is now consistently achieving one-week delivery time for its customers.

Results:

- * Increased sales by \$500,000.
- * Realized \$250,000 in cost savings.
- * Reduced inventory by \$100,000.
- * Reduced work in process by 50 percent.
- * Retained 100 jobs.

Testimonial:

"Thanks to IMEC's help, we've positioned ourselves to be even more competitive when the economy picks up again."

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Brad Surrells, Assistant Plant Manager